Delegation of Nursing Tasks in Utah Schools

All students attending public schools must have access to health care during the school day and for extracurricular school activities if necessary to enable the student to participate fully in the program. The federal laws include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Since most schools in Utah do not have a full time nurse in each school it is often necessary to delegate specific nursing tasks to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP) so that children with special healthcare needs can attend school. Knowing when and how to delegate specific nursing tasks is essential for the school nurse. Only a professional nurse can delegate nursing care. Further, nursing delegation is not appropriate for all students, all nursing tasks, or all school settings (NASN, 2018). Tasks commonly performed by a parent/guardian at home take on a more complex dimension in the school setting. What appears to be a simple task is held to a much higher standard at school. Any health- related procedure in school requires medical orders, and licensed nurses are held to a higher standard than a parent would be for the same procedure (Resha, 2010).

The National Association of School Nurses states "Nursing delegation in the school setting is the assignment by the school nurse – not a school administrator – to a competent unlicensed individual (also called unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP) the performance of a selected nursing task in a selected situation for an individual student. The school nurse facilitates the UAP training, evaluation of the UAP competence, and provides for ongoing supervision of the UAP and evaluation of the student's health outcomes. The nursing process can never be delegated".

Delegation means to transfer to an unlicensed individual, including unlicensed assistive personnel or a responsible caregiver, the authority to perform a task that, according to generally accepted industry standards or law, and does not require a nursing assessment (R156-31b-102 SS 13,C).

Assessment, planning, evaluation and nursing judgment cannot be delegated. Delegation is a student and situation specific activity in which the nurse must consider <u>all</u> components of the delegation process for <u>each</u> delegation decision.

References

Bobo, N. (2018). Principles for practice: Nursing delegation to unlicensed assistive personnel in the school setting (2^{nd} edition). NASN.

Resha, C. (2010). Delegation in the school setting: Is it a safe practice? *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*. 15(2).

Utah Nurse Practice Act (58-31b)

Utah Nurse Practice Act Rule (R156-31b)

Delegation Decision-making Tree

Has a healthcare provider ordered the health care task?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	,	
Are there laws and rules in place which support delegation?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	,	
Is the task within the scope of practice of the RN?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	<i>Y</i>	
Has there been an assessment of the student's needs?	No	Assess, then proceed with consideration of
Yes	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	delegation
Have the parent given permission for the task to be delegated?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	ı , ,	
Is there an IHP that has identified the task to be delegated?	No	Create the IHP, then proceed with consideration
Yes	ı	of delegation
Is the task one that is considered routine care, poses little potential hazard, and is generally expected to produce a predictable outcome for the student?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes		
Is the UAP competent to accept the delegation?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	<i>V</i>	
Can the task be performed without requiring nursing judgment?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	,	
Has a copy of the IHP been given to the UAP?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes		
Can the task be safely performed without complex observations or critical decisions?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	•	
Can the task be performed without repeated nursing assessments?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	V	
Is appropriate supervision available?	No	DO NOT DELEGATE
Yes	V	
DELEGATE		